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ABSTRACT

A questionnaire was administered to the 1976 graduates of Corning Community College (New York) in order to obtain graduates' evaluations of their college experience. Data from 341 questionnaire responses were tabulated and compared to responses obtained from graduates of previous years. Among the findings were: (1) learning skills for a career were cited as the most important learning experience by 55% of the respondents; (2) only one-quarter of the 1976 graduates had changed programs as compared to nearly one-third of the 1975 graduates; (3) 14% of the 1976 graduates interrupted their attendance for one semester or more compared to 9% in 1972; (4) 65% of the 1976 graduates described their college experience as either good or excellent as compared to 59% of the 1975 graduates; (5) library and faculty-related functions of the college received the highest evaluations; (6) social activities received higher evaluations than in the previous year as did orientation and the community's role in education; and (7) one-third of the respondents were concerned with advisement as it related to college policy and requirements and courses. Tabulated results of the questionnaire for the five years 1972 through 1976 are presented in the document. (JDS)

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1976 Graduates Evaluate Their Experiences at CCC: A Comparison with Four Previous Years

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Corning Community College

The present report is based on 341 responses to the questionnaire administered to our 1976 graduates.

Table 1 summarizes the student characteristics and their overall evaluation of CCC.

From Table 1 it can be seen that there was little difference between 1976 and the previous three years in the percent of students whose attendance had been interrupted. However, a smaller percent of students in 1976 checked the category (c) "Personal reasons -- lack of interest or direction", as compared to 1975.

Somewhat fewer students changed their programs in 1976 than in 1975, and a smaller percent of these students made the change during the first two weeks of school (item 4).

Item 12 suggests that the increasing satisfaction with extracurricular activities for the 1975 graduates as compared to previous years has continued for the 1976 graduates.

The six types of learning experiences in item 14 came from open-ended questions and interviews during 1973. It can be seen that, in the same way as in previous years, the largest number of students rated "Learning skills for a career" as their most important learning experiences. As one might expect, the experiences came mostly from "In-class activities".

Table 1

Characteristics of 1976 Graduates and Overall Evaluation of CCC in Comparison with 1975, 1974, 1973, and 1972.

Item	Percent				
	1976	1975	1974	1973	1972
1. Attendance was interrupted for a semester or more	14	13	14	12	9
2. Reasons for interruption					
a. Academic separation or other academic reasons	13	11	8	11	30
b. Lack of financial resources	13	9	12	14	10

JC 770 013

Table 1 continued

Item	1976	1975	Percent 1974	1973	1972
2. Reasons for interruption continued..					
c. Personal reasons -- lack of interest or direction.	28	40	20	28	13
d Armed forces	15	9	16	17	-
e. Other	32	32	45	31	47
3. Changed programs.	25	32	27	28	29
4. Change made before 1st two weeks of school.	14	27	23	22	26
5. Knew field of study or occupation when admitted.	76	70	68	69	74
6. Choice of field or occupation same as when entered.	73	67	73	68	71
7. Held a job while attending college.					
a. No	29	27	24	23	-
b. Part of the time	42	48	51	49	-
c. All of the time	30	25	25	28	-
8. Have your parents generally provided encouragement for:					
a. Classroom learning experience					
a. A great deal	51	40	36	43	54
b. Some	36	48	45	42	38
c. None	13	12	19	15	8
b. Extra curricular club and other activities					
a. A great deal	9	12	9	10	13
b. Some	36	41	38	46	43
c. None	55	47	54	44	44
c. Social activities					
a. A great deal	15	15	11	15	15
b. Some	49	54	51	52	55
c. None	36	31	38	33	31

Table 1 continued

Item	1976	1975	Percent 1974	1973	1972
8. continued...					
d. Sports					
a. A great deal	11	15	10	12	9
b. Some	38	38	34	38	33
c. None	51	47	56	51	62
9. Membership in extra curricular organizations	41	48	43	59	58
10. How would you describe in general, your participation in the club or organization?					
1. Active in week to week meetings and projects	42	44	43	49	57
2. Occasionally active for special events	20	21	23	18	18
3. Sporadically attending meetings or events	17	14	15	18	12
4. Other	21	21	19	15	13
11. How would you describe your club or organization advisor?					
1. Very helpful	48	46	50	42	47
2. Moderately helpful	30	31	30	42	38
3. Showed no interest	9	9	8	9	9
4. Other	13	13	12	7	6
12. Did you find your club experiences important to you?					
1. Definitely	46	48	35	40	44
2. So-so	34	30	35	38	41
3. No	19	22	29	22	15
13. How would you generally describe your experiences at CCC?					
a. Excellent	18	16	15	18	18
b. Good	47	43	46	43	52
c. Mostly satisfactory	25	27	30	30	21
d. Quite unsatisfactory	4	9	4	4	5
e. Not sure	5	5	6	5	5

Table 1 continued

Item	1976 %Rank 1st	1975 %Rank 1st	1974 %Rank 1st	1976 % In Class	1976 % Out Class	1975 % In Class	1975 % Out Class	1974 %In Class	1974 %Out Class
14. What were your most important learning experiences at CCC?									
Interacting with other people	24	32	37	35	30	24	34	28	37
Gaining self confidence	27	30	30	38	33	34	30	35	37
Greater understanding of others	15	16	13	29	41	25	36	27	43
Greater understanding of self	29	32	28	28	40	18	41	30	40
Learning skills for a career	55	54	47	71	7	70	9	73	8
Learning about a particular subject	38	36	29	78	3	74	3	80	7

Table 2 presents the 1976 graduate evaluation of thirty-five different functions, services,or programs at our college in comparison with 1973, 1974, and 1975 graduates. A three-point scale was used. The response categories were: 1 = Needs improvement, 2 = Satisfactory, 3 = Very good.

The results have been amazingly consistent over the years with Library and Faculty related functions (items 8, 17, 1, 25, 26) still receiving the highest evaluations and Parking (items 30, 31) receiving the lowest evaluations.

In other categories, a gradually lower evaluation has been given to "College rules and regulations regarding students life" (item 2), however, at the same time "Social activities" (item 6) has been receiving increasingly higher evaluations. Evaluation of Housing (item 10) has been steadily increasing. However, Job placement (item 19), probably due to increasing unemployment in the area, has decreased. Orientation (item 27) and Community's role in education (item 35) have both received increasingly higher evaluations.

Table 2

Item	1976 N	1976 Mean	1975 N	1975 Mean	1974 N	1974 Mean	1973 N	1973 Mean
1. Quality of classroom instruction.	322	2.11	339	2.09	332	2.02	334	2.01
2. College rules and regulations regarding student life.	304	1.69	318	1.74	293	1.86	320	1.96
3. College rules & regulations regarding academic courses & programs.	311	1.76	330	1.74	313	1.74	329	1.85

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Table 2 continued

Item	1976 N**	1976 Mean*	1975 N	1975 Mean	1974 N	1974 Mean	1973 N	1973 Mean
4. Student counselling	289	1.70	300	1.76	293	1.88	321	1.83
5. Faculty advisors	312	1.92	325	1.91	322	2.04	320	1.98
6. Social activities	278	1.67	298	1.60	280	1.46	298	1.52
7. Food services	283	1.64	276	1.54	296	1.53	309	1.72
8. Library rules & regulations	303	2.14	325	2.17	310	2.12	324	2.13
9. The Crier	299	1.83	321	1.90	284	1.66	295	1.31
10. Housing	158	1.67	189	1.47	202	1.37	218	1.44
11. Convocations & Speakers	251	1.89	291	1.99	272	2.01	286	1.94
12. Transfer counselling	213	1.75	244	1.82	225	1.80	249	1.90
13. Student Health service	202	1.91	254	1.96	234	1.99	278	2.08
14. Athletic program	234	1.91	258	1.93	222	1.98	260	1.93
15. Recreation & Intramural	224	1.97	237	1.89	224	1.94	263	1.93
16. College's interest in students	298	1.79	319	1.85	305	1.82	313	1.84
17. Study facilities in library	302	2.24	332	2.34	306	2.32	330	2.30
18. Study facilities in other areas of campus.	292	1.73	322	1.82	291	1.76	313	1.88
19. Job placement assistance	211	1.70	216	1.77	194	1.85	256	1.91
20. Financial aid assistance	241	1.94	264	1.95	240	1.95	279	2.04
21. Registration for classes	313	1.78	332	1.80	311	1.76	325	1.83
22. Student government operations and services	205	1.61	232	1.62	222	1.55	254	1.52
23. Lounge & relaxing areas	306	1.88	320	1.95	306	1.88	324	1.92
24. College help to students seeking housing	152	1.84	177	1.68	177	1.65	208	1.75
25. Help from faculty on academic matters	305	2.13	317	2.07	299	2.09	320	2.12
26. Faculty help with personal concerns of students	278	2.12	284	2.11	248	2.06	292	2.11
27. Orientation	271	1.90	302	1.83	276	1.74	302	1.72
28. Communications on campus	283	1.56	305	1.57	276	1.41	301	1.42
29. Involvement in college government	219	1.40	257	1.38	243	1.30	255	1.38
30. Parking facilities	301	1.26	325	1.30	311	1.52	314	1.52
31. Parking rules & regulations	299	1.35	320	1.32	299	1.45	302	1.44
32. College's response to personal situtations you have faced	223	1.78	249	1.78	230	1.86	262	1.92
33. College's role in facilitating your learning experience	305	2.07	314	2.07	303	1.98	320	2.02
34. College's climate for facilitating appreciation of creative and performing arts	241	1.84	283	1.81	274	1.72	281	1.75
35. Community's role in helping you reach your educational goals	261	1.93	274	1.91	250	1.78	274	1.77

* The mean is based on a three-point scale. 1 = needs improvement, 2 = satisfactory, 3 = Very good.

** An N of less than 341 indicates that some students checked "Inadequate information to respond", or left the item blank.

In past years we have observed a discrepancy between advisor evaluations by our students during pre-registration and at the time of graduation. At pre-registration the evaluations have been very favorable. However, the graduates have tended to give only moderate evaluations.

In 1976 an open-ended question was included in the graduate questionnaire asking the students to comment on how the advising system could be improved. About one third of graduates filling out the evaluation form chose to respond to the open-ended question, suggesting that advising was an important concern to our graduates.

Results supported our assumption that immediately prior to graduation students evaluate advising more critically, since topics, such as graduation requirements, transferability of courses, qualifications for jobs are more meaningful to them than they were earlier in their education careers. Retrospectively, many students felt that their programs got off to a wrong start from the very beginning, but the problems only became apparent during the last semester.

About one third of the student recommendations for improvement dealt with accuracy of early information about College's rules and regulations, graduation requirements, transferability of courses, and course options.

About a quarter of recommendations implied that advisors were not readily available for consultation. The divisions that were not cited in this regard were: Math-Science, Bio-Chem, HPER, and Nursing.

About a quarter of the recommendations dealt with making more time available for advising.

About ten percent of students urged that advisors should be in the major subject field of the student. In this regard liberal arts students expressed more concern than others.

Concluding, I feel we have an explanation regarding the differences in advisor evaluation during pre-registration and at graduation. From graduate responses it was also abundantly clear that students do not regard that it is their responsibility to read and understand the catalog and other written regulations. Perhaps the regulations are too complex to be easily understood.